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ABSTRACT

The early emergence of nontraditional graduate education programs is traced with particular emphasis on Nova University's Center for Higher Education. Characteristics of the independent learner that are essential in providing transformational leadership are also addressed. Nova University's innovative approaches provide nontraditional choices for a broad range of students. The Center for Higher Education provides a field-based Doctor of Education program for practitioners working in three specialized areas: higher education; leadership in adult education; and vocational, technical, and occupational education. The Center uses a field-based delivery format in combining instruction, independent study, and applied research. Students are required to complete seven seminars, five practicums, and a major applied research project. Five of the seven seminars are core seminars that are required for all students regardless of specialization. The core seminars are: curriculum and program planning, governance and management, applied educational research and evaluation, learning theory and applications, and societal factors affecting education. Specialization seminars are also offered, and two are required of each student choosing that specialization. (SW)

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THE INDEPENDENT LEARNER:

THE KEY CHARACTERISTIC IN TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

by

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for Higher Education Programs
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> The biggest "infrastructure" challenge for this country in the next decade is not the billions needed for railroads, highways and energy. It is the American school system, from kindergarten through Ph.D. program and the post-graduate education of adults. And it requires something far scarcer than money - thinking and risk-taking.
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>
> Peter F. Drucker, "The Coming Changes In Our School Systems," The Wall Street Journal, March 3, 1981.

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I. Introduction

The ultimate goal of graduate education is to design programs of preparation to promote improvement in the quality of education and training to develop in graduate students the competencies and skills necessary for people to carry out a role that society has deemed necessary to its well-being. In order to achieve that goal, persons with extensive background and experience engage in research about the preparation of professionals and the contexts in which they work and translate that research into graduate programs to assist persons to attain a high level of proficiency in order to provide statesman-like leadership to institutions of society. Some institutions also provide post-doctoral continuing education programs to assist persons to maintain and to improve essential leadership skills.

Professional graduate education is in the earliest stages of becoming a genuine science. It depends on and borrows heavily from other fields such as psychology, sociology, management science, law, and a broad range of disciplines. Furthermore, professional graduate education occurs as a result of a philosophy and conceptual framework which is the elongated shadow of the values and background of a group of full-time and part-time experienced professional educators who attempt to assemble the curriculum - a mosaic of content, methods for delivering that body of knowledge, and techniques for assessing the acquisition of competencies and skills by students.

This paper will trace the early emergence of non-traditional graduate education programs with particular emphasis on Nova University's Center for Higher Education and then focus on characteristics of the independent learner that are essential in providing transformational leadership.

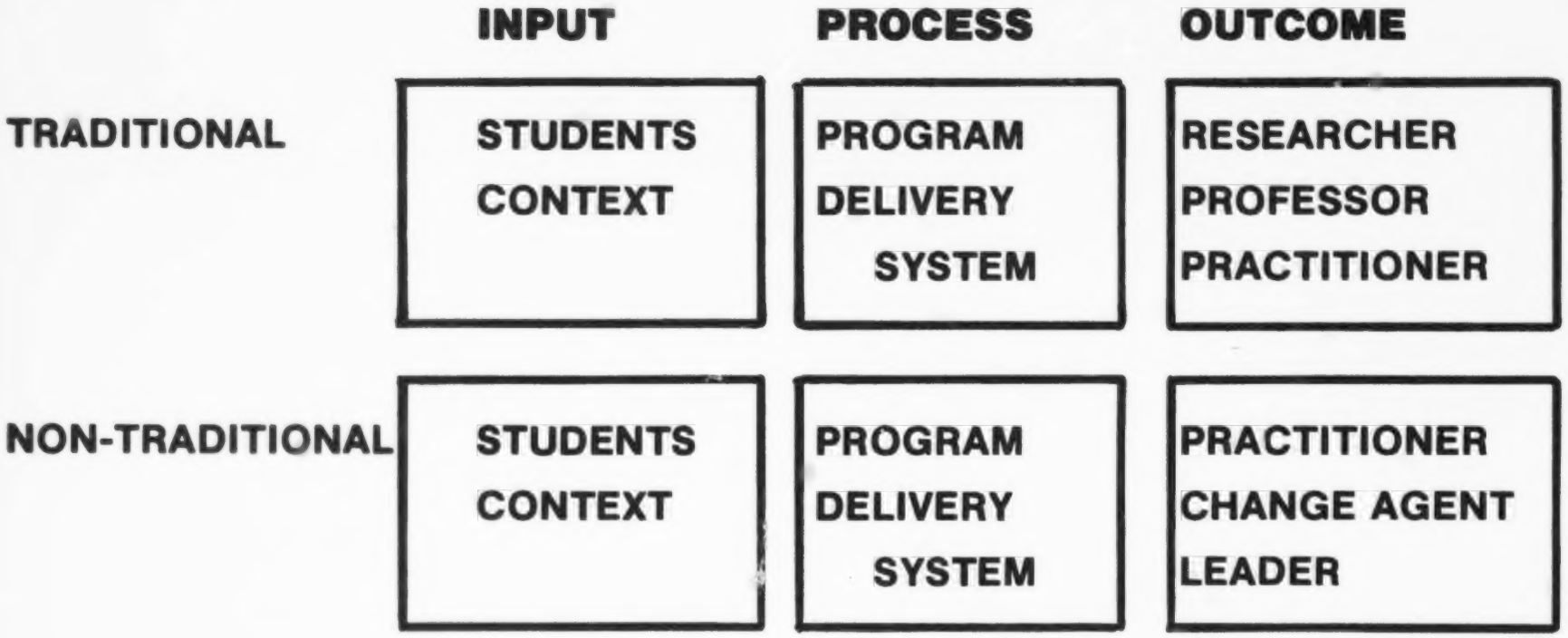
II. The Emergence of Nontraditional Graduate Education Programs

When the Sputniks were launched in 1957, many sectors of the education and training industry began to examine their mission and role. Several traditional institutions began to review their programs, including content formats, delivery system formats, and formats for evaluating student competencies. The criticisms about education, particularly at the undergraduate and graduate levels, also gave birth to a number of non-traditional programs. It was in this context that Nova University was founded in 1964.

It is helpful to use a systems approach using the categories of input, process, and outcomes in contrasting traditional and non-traditional programs. Inputs in both types of programs include students and context. In traditional campus-based programs the students tend to be in the early years of their professional careers and from rather similar contexts. The process tends to be primarily on didactic instruction with emphasis on theory and research, sometimes to the exclusion of practical application. The intended outcome is to produce researchers, professors, or practitioners. In the Nova University field-based programs the students tend to be in the middle years of their professional careers and serve as practitioners in quite different contexts. The process includes some didactic instruction with emphasis on theory and research with extensive application through five practicums and a Major Applied Research Project. The program and delivery system is described more fully in the following sections. The intended outcome is to produce qualitative superior practitioners who can carry on a safe practice of managing their unit but is at least aware of what is required to become agents of social change.

Since its beginning, Nova University designed and implemented innovative approaches which provide nontraditional choices for a broad range of students.

SYSTEMS APPROACH TO CONTRAST TRADITIONAL AND NON-TRADITIONAL PROGRAMS



In 1971, the university developed its first field-based program for practicing elementary- and secondary-level school administrators. This National Ed.D. Program for Education Leaders is currently being offered to candidates in 17 states through the Center for School Leadership Development.

In 1972, the university developed the Ed.D. program for community college personnel. This program led to the development of the Center for Higher Education which will be described briefly in the next section.

In 1974, the university developed the Ed.D. program in early and middle childhood. This program is offered through the Center for the Advancement of Education which is dedicated to assisting teachers, counselors, trainers, administrators, and other persons working in education and health and human service professions.

III. The Center for Higher Education

The Center for Higher Education provides a field-based Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) program for practitioners working in three specialized areas: (1) higher education; (2) leadership in adult education; and (3) vocational, technical, and occupational education. Many students enrolled in these programs are employed in postsecondary education, business and industry, the health care delivery system, and military training. The center uses a field-based delivery format in combining instruction, independent study, and applied research.

Students are required to complete seven seminars, five practicums, and a major applied research project (MARP). Five of the seven seminars are core seminars that are required for all students regardless of specialization. The core seminars are: (1) Curriculum and Program Planning, (2) Governance and Management, (3) Applied Educational Research and Evaluation, (4) Learning

Theory and Applications, and (5) Societal Factors Affecting Education. Two are specialization seminars that are taken only by those students who have chosen that specialization. The specialization seminars are as follows:

Higher Education

1. The Politics, Law, and Economics of Higher Education.
2. The Emergence of Higher Education in America.

Leadership in Adult Education

1. History, Philosophy, and Nature of Adult Education.
2. The Theory and Practice of Adult Education Methodology.

Vocational, Technical, and Occupational Education

1. Personnel - Human Resources Development.
2. The Emergence of Vocational, Technical, and Occupational Education in America.

Practicums are applied research projects that are designed to promote the solution to current problems in the establishment in which the student works. Practicums are highly structured opportunities to put theory into practice and to submit newly acquired knowledge and skills to the reality of the workplace. Students must successfully complete five practicums, one of which must be in a specialization seminar.

MARP's are much like practicums, only much more ambitious and rigorous. The MARP is the capstone to doctoral study.

The integrated program of study is designed so that it can be completed in approximately three years. Normally, students attend one seminar per quarter. Three sessions are held for each seminar. Practicums are undertaken after the completion of the seminar. The MARP is undertaken after the completion of seminars and practicums.

Students are organized into groups called clusters. Clusters provide the vehicle through which instruction and other services are provided to students. Cluster coordinators, professional educators who serve as local representatives of Nova University, manage all activities and services at the local level. During the first two nine-month academic years, formal instruction is offered by national lectures during three three-month terms. National lecturers travel to the cluster sites for seminar meetings. The specialization seminars are delivered in a new format which is described in the section which follows.

IV. The New Delivery System Format

Discussion about alternative ways to deliver the specialization seminars occurred throughout the early 1980s. These discussions became more focused in the spring of 1983. During the summer of 1983, a commitment was made to convene a meeting of national lecturers (1) to develop the conceptual framework for the new delivery system format, (2) to identify the components that would be included in the new delivery system, (3) to discuss alternative ways to design the various components, and (4) to establish the time-line for implementing the new delivery system.

These discussions included a review of research about adult learning and components that would be a part of the new delivery system format. Ultimately the national lecturers decided the new system should include the following components: (a) a learning contract, (b) required units, (c) elective units, (d) participation in the Summer Institute, and (e) a synthesis paper.

Specialization seminar materials were developed or modified during the fall of 1983, and winter of 1984. These materials were distributed to students in March 1984. Specialization seminars offered through this new format in 1984 were as follows:

Higher Education	- The Politics, Law, and Economics of Higher Education - The Emergence of Higher Education in America
Adult Education	- History, Philosophy, and Nature of Adult Education
VTO Education	- Personnel - Human Resources Development

Specialization seminars offered through this new format in 1985 were as follows:

Higher Education	- The Politics, Law, and Economics of Higher Education - The Emergence of Higher Education in America
Adult Education	- Theory and Practice of Adult Education Methodology
VTO Education	- The Emergence of VTO Education in America

The 1984 cycle was repeated in 1986 and the 1985 cycle was repeated in 1987.

V. VALUE OF THE PROGRAM

The Nova University higher education programs have contributed a great deal to the education and training industry. The mosaic of didactic and applications components contribute to the process of preparing persons to carry on a safe practice of "management" in a variety of contexts -- health and human services, business and industry, government and military, and secondary and post-secondary education.

Even though Nova University has made a significant contribution to the society of which it is a part, the programs are still in their infancy in terms of producing what Peter Mill's calls "educational revolutionaries." This nation, like most industrial nations, is undergoing a fundamental change, a transformation so profound that it impacts on every aspect of our lives and has tremendous implications for the way we manage our institutions. This nation needs persons who have the competencies and skills that go beyond the safe practice of managing the institutions of society. Our nation needs statesmen-

THE NOVA UNIVERSITY HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Didactic	Application
Learning Theory	
Research and Evaluation	Practicum #1
Curriculum	Practicum #2
Specialization #1	Practicum #3
Societal Factors	Practicum #4
Governance & Management	Practicum #5
Specialization #2	
	Major Applied Research Project

SAFE PRACTICE OF MANAGEMENT

+ STRATEGIC THINKING

STATESMEN — LIKE TRANSFORMATION LEADERSHIP

like leaders who can transform our institutions or who can design and create entirely new institutions.

To accomplish the goal of developing transformation leadership, I shall make a distinction between strategic thinking and operational planning.

Strategic thinking and operational planning require two distinct modes of thought. Strategic thinking has a focus on what an organization or group of agencies want to achieve. Strategic thinking should produce a long-term vision of the future based on an analysis of several alternative scenarios and the specification of a preferred scenario. The long-term vision of the 1990s and the 21st Century should be based on an analysis of a broad range of demographic, social, economic, political, technological, and other variables.

Operational planning maps out how that vision will be achieved. Operational planning consists of the interpretation of a preferred scenario into a multi-year action plan with a statement of resource requirements. The first year of the multi-year action plan contains detailed objectives to which fiscal year operating dollars are assigned. The operational plan provides the conceptual framework for organization development and for human resources development and evaluation.

VI. Challenge

In The Necessary Revolution In American Education, Francis Keppel states:

> The first revolution in American education was a revolution in quantity. Everyone was to be provided the chance for an education of some sort. That revolution is almost won in the schools, and is on its way in higher education. The second revolution is equality of opportunity. That revolution is under way. The next turn of the wheel must be a revolution in quality. Keppel (1966:1)

We must collectively rethink the way in which we prepare leaders for the 1990s, and the 21st century. As a nation, we did a reasonably good job during the era of quantitative expansion. We aren't doing as good a job during the equality of opportunity revolution. We made some initial gains but now the data suggest that those increments of growth are being lost. The early signs about the efforts to superimpose mandates to improve the quality of the education and training of industry on the industrial model of "schooling" has produced mixed results. We have created more bureaucratic hurdles in the industrial model which is causing higher levels of drop out and stop out rates.

VII. Outcomes

The current education reform movement acknowledges the enormous primacy of education and training - learning is the capital forming industry of an advanced society. If we are to be the beneficiaries of the technical society, we must rethink the way we manage the learning tasks of an advanced technical society and redesign our institutions to fit the new learning paradigms.

As a first step we must develop a vision of the 1990s and the 21st century and anticipate how the learning tasks of an advanced technical society should be organized. As a second step, we must critically analyze the philosophy and mission of the nontraditional program and speculate about the role a nontraditional program will possibly play in the advanced technical society. Third, we must then examine the inputs, process, and outcomes of our nontraditional program. The focus of institutions is inextricably tied to adult and continuing education, lifelong learning, and is very much dependent upon the attributes of the independent, self-directed learner.

VISIONS OF THE FUTURE

	1955	1985	2000	2020
	Postindustrial Society	Early Technical Society	Advanced Technical Society	
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES				
BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY				
GOVERNMENT AND MILITARY				
EDUCATION AND TRAINING				

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